

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. APPLICATION NO. 09/540,990
ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. Q58575

REMARKS

I. Formal Matters

Claims 1-14 are all the claims pending in the present application.

The Examiner indicates that claims 4-14 would be allowed if re-written into independent form, including all of the limitations of the claims from which they depend. Applicant respectfully requests that the re-writing of these claims be held in abeyance until the Examiner considers the arguments presented herein with respect to claims 1-3.

II. Art Rejections

Claims 1-2. Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated separately by Urushidani, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,022,025 (“Urushidani”), and Henrion, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,237,565 (“Henrion”). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Applicant respectfully submits that both Urushidani and Henrion fail to disclose or suggest at least “a unit switch at the first stage assigns a sequence number to an input packet according to a destination of the packet,” as recited in Claim 1.

Urushidani is directed to a self-routing switch and a method of routing in which destination information and judge times are appended to information data. The destination information comprises the address of a routing information eliminator HE_p, represented in binary form. (Urushidani, col. 1, lns. 45-60). The judge time is an integer initially set to n, which is decremented by one each time it passes through a switching stage. (Col. 6, lns. 11-31).

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Urushidani fails to disclose or suggest, however, assigning a sequence number to an information packet based on the destination of the packet. Because Urushidani fails to disclose or suggest this limitation of assigning a sequence number, it also fails to disclose or suggest outputting “a packet received from a unit switch at a preceding stage according to a sequence number assigned to the packet,” as recited in Claim 1, and assigning “to an input packet, a sequence number set for each combination of a unit switch which has received input of the packet and a unit switch which finally outputs the packet,” as recited in Claim 2.

Henrion is directed to a self-routing switching network utilizing cell control headers, CCHs, attached to each of a first sub-cell within a cell or packet. The CCH comprises a routing control code, RCC, a destination indication, RCA, and a multicast tree internal reference number, IRN. (Henrion, col. 9, lns. 5-26). The RCC is information in five bits relating to a routing mode. (Col. 3, lns. 1-10). The RCA is an address information, for example the address of an output port of the switching network, comprising up to 14 bits. (Col. 9, lns. 41-48). The IRN also comprises 14 bits and includes information relating to a set of destination output ports. This information isn’t necessarily cell-specific. (Col. 9, lns. 49-66). According to Henrion, all of the above information may be appended to the first sub-cell within a cell. However, like Urushidani, Henrion fails to disclose or suggest assigning a sequence number to an information packet based on the destination of the packet. Again, like Urushidani, Henrion fails to disclose or suggest this limitation of assigning a sequence number, and therefore also fails to disclose or suggest outputting “a packet received from a unit switch at a preceding stage according to a sequence number assigned to the packet,” as recited in Claim 1, or assigning “to an input packet, a

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sequence number set for each combination of a unit switch which has received input of the packet and a unit switch which finally outputs the packet,” as recited in Claim 2.

For at least the above exemplary reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that neither Urushidani, nor Henrion anticipates the present invention as recited in Claims 1-2. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to withdraw the §102(b) rejections from claims 1-2.

Claim 3. Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Urushidani and Henrion, separately. Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 3 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependence on Claim 1. The Examiner acknowledges that neither Urushidani nor Henrion discloses assigning a total number of sequence numbers based on a maximum value of a queuing delay. However, as discussed above, neither Urushidani nor Henrion discloses or suggests assigning a sequence number.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention as recited in Claim 3 is patentable over both Urushidani and Henrion. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to withdraw the §103(a) rejection from Claim 3.

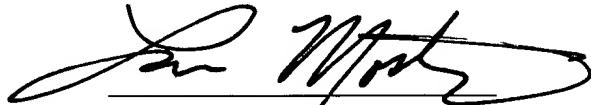
III. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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